



## Études photographiques

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Images de guerre, photographies mises en page

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# The Economics of Research

Thierry Gervais

Traducteur : James Gussen

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- 1 In 1997, when we first decided to post a selection of the journal's articles online, we already suspected that the Internet would alter the landscape of research in visual history. But how? A historian by training, I am once again reminded that it is easier to analyze the past than to predict the future.
- 2 Now, in 2011, we are in a position to observe the transformations in both the subjects and tools of research as well as the dissemination of the results. The production of images using new technologies such as the camera phone<sup>1</sup> and their circulation through social networks<sup>2</sup> provide notable examples of recent research topics. In terms of tools, easy access to collections catalogues and, more importantly, the possibility of remote viewing of documents have produced a genuine revolution in the nature of research work. Who could have imagined just five years ago that Life magazine, such an essential component in the history of news photography, would be made available, in its entirety, by Google? More recently, blogs created by researchers allow for ideas, first raised in the seminar room, to be pursued online and connections within the research community to be forged; for a journal like ours, they also represent an invaluable pool of works in progress, destined for publication.<sup>3</sup> The means of disseminating research is no longer what it once was. Rare is the journal that does not have a website offering an electronic version of the articles approved by its editorial board and published in its print edition. For researchers, this is a tremendous boon, since it provides them with an online library and the opportunity to download and build a collection of useful texts, and to use the site's search engine to navigate quickly and easily within the articles. Libraries, fully aware of the development, have responded by making massive investments in these new resources, a commitment they are all the more eager to undertake since it relieves them of the management, maintenance, and storage of physical objects.
- 3 Because of these recent developments in research and the research marketplace, at *Études Photographiques* we cannot continue to think of our website as a simple tool for communication. Not only is the tool itself no longer effective enough, but a decline in

subscriptions of the journal's print edition is increasingly depriving us of the financial resources that would allow us to go on offering the electronic edition for free – a paradox we would rather avoid. Research has its costs, and we have had to rethink our business model to ensure that those costs are met.

- 4 New journals such as *Photographies* and *Photography and Culture* are supported by major online distributors – Taylor & Francis and Berg respectively. The offerings of these publishers, available through most university libraries, include not only the texts themselves but also the mechanisms to facilitate research; the same is true for the electronic bundles of journals provided by Elsevier and Jstor. It is no longer enough for us to offer the content for free; readers must also be provided with the means to find and make full use of our articles. While most illustrated journals ask authors to cover their own illustration costs, this is not the case with *Études Photographiques*. In addition to publishing the work of researchers who have the support of their institutions, we also support that of students, who are more isolated. Finally, we continue to set store by the elegance of our journal's print edition, which we like to see richly illustrated and printed in color on quality paper. For these reasons, our articles will henceforth be posted online six months after publication. We are also joining the electronic journal bundles ProQuest and OpenEdition,<sup>4</sup> which will offer subscriptions of the content available on our website to libraries, as well as PDF and ePub versions of the articles and a set of tools to which students and researchers will have free access – a publishing strategy, in other words, that is adapted to the new Internet age and one which will also represent a source of income for the journal. The next step will be to distribute the English-language version the same way.

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## NOTES

1. Gaby David, 'Camera Phone Images, Videos and Live Streaming: A Contemporary Visual Trend,' *Visual Studies*, no. 1 (2010): 89–98.
2. André Gunthert, 'Shared Images: How the Internet Has Transformed the Image Economy,' *Études photographiques*, no. 24 (November 2009): 199–209.
3. See <http://hypotheses.org/> and <http://culturevisuelle.org/>.
4. Marin Dacos, 'OpenEdition Freemium,' posted January 18, 2011, consulted March 18, 2011 (<http://www.openedition.org/8699>).